

BEFORE THE
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of)

Revision of the Commission's Rules)

To Ensure Compatibility with)

Enhanced 911 Emergency)

Calling Systems)

CC Docket No. 94-102

DA 98-2631

INLAND CELLULAR TELEPHONE COMPANY'S REPLY TO COMMENTS AND
RESPONSES IN OPPOSITION TO WAIVER REQUESTS

Inland Cellular Telephone Company, by its attorneys and on behalf of Eastern Sub-RSA Limited Partnership and Washington RSA Number 8 Limited Partnership (hereafter "Petitioner"), by its attorneys, respectfully submits its reply to the comments and responses in opposition to the requests for a waiver of Section 20.18 of the Commission's Rules.¹

I. Petitioner Has No Vested Interest in Either a Network-Based or Handset-Based Solution

Unlike the majority of parties who oppose a grant of the waiver requests,² Petitioner has no vested interest in whether a network-based or handset-based solution is adopted. Petitioner is a small system owner of rural systems and does not stand to benefit financially from the development of either technology. Petitioner is solely interested in finding a solution or solutions to best meet its needs and deploy that technology as quickly as possible. Petitioner, of course, does not wish to delay life-saving technology. It filed a waiver request to ensure that the technology or technologies which are eventually utilized will work within a system *and* be compatible with other systems.

II. Petitioner's Petition for Waiver Does Not Subvert the 2001 Deadline for Provision of ALI via a Network Solution

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¹ Petitioner regrets the brevity of its Reply, however that is necessitated by: 1) Petitioner's inability to obtain the comments from the FCC's Public Reference room until two days prior to the date the Reply was due; 2) Petitioner did not receive the first of the comments via mail until last Thursday; and 3) FCC staff's unwillingness to extend the reply period.

² See SigmaOne Communications Corporation's Opposition to Waiver Requests; KSI, Inc.'s Reply to Comments and Requests for Waiver; TruePosition, Inc.'s, Opposition to E911 Comments and Waiver Requests.

Most of the parties opposing the waiver requests³ misconstrue Petitioner's intention in requesting the waiver. Petitioner has no desire to undermine to October 1, 2001 deadline but rather seeks flexibility to consider utilizing promising new technology utilizing the GPS satellite system. Thus, if reviewed calmly, Petitioner's waiver request does not eviscerate the 2001 deadline as suggested by some commenters, rather it maximizes Petitioner's planning flexibility by fostering the maturation of promising technology and its introduction into wireless telephony in a phased-in manner.⁴ While a waiver would alter the Commission's present schedule, a waiver, if granted, would usher in a new technology on a phased-in basis which is conceptually consistent with the Commission's prior pronouncement.

III. Grant of the Waiver Requests Will Not Undermine the Goal of "Technological Neutrality"

TruePosition argues that in order to remain "technologically neutral," the Commission should refrain from granting waivers. That argument seems counter-intuitive. If GPS is a promising technology and absent a waiver, carriers and equipment vendors would be foreclosed from developing, or even considering it, the Commission should, in order to remain technologically neutral, meaningfully consider waivers.⁵

IV. The "Roamer" Problem

KSI and other commenters were critical of the waiver requests, including that of Petitioner, which failed to provide a solution to the issue of how to provide Phase II ALI for a wireless subscriber without a location enabled handset who roams into a system where a carrier has employed a handset-based location solution. Petitioner candidly admits it does not have the solution at this time, but reiterates that the solution will have to arise out of industry efforts.⁶ Petitioner is baffled at criticism of an industry-wide approach, as historically E911 issues have been worked through on an industry-wide basis with the oversight of the FCC. Petitioner believes that if a handset solution proves

³ See SigmaOne Communications Corporation's Opposition to Waiver Requests; KSI, Inc.'s Reply to Comments and Requests for Waiver; TruePosition, Inc.'s, Opposition to E911 Comments and Waiver Requests; Cell-Loc, Inc.'s Comments; Public Safety Associations' Comments.

⁴ Since 1996, the Commission has contemplated that ALI would be implemented by wireless carriers in three steps, rather than all at once. The first step, to be completed within one year after the effective date of the Order adopting rules in the proceeding, was for wireless carriers to design their systems that the location of the base station or cell site receiving a 911 call from a mobile unit would be relayed to the PSAP. The next step, within three years of the Order, is for wireless service providers to include an estimate of the approximate location and distance of the mobile unit from the receiving base station or cell site. After five years, the location of the mobile unit must be identified within three dimensions, within a radius of no more than 125 meters. See Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 11 FCC Rcd 18676, 18686-18687 (1996) (*E911 First Report and Order*).

⁵ Petitioner is concerned that network-based technology proponents such as KSI, SigmaOne and TruePosition may be attempting to utilize this proceeding to further private interests rather than the public interest. Petitioner concurs with the Commission that the success or failure of network or handset-based solutions should be determined by the marketplace and not by regulatory fiat.

⁶ See also Advantage Cellular Systems, Inc. Request for Waiver at 3 (recognizing that the issue of roamer capability has yet to be satisfactorily addressed by equipment manufacturers).

to be superior or the only workable technology in smaller markets, an industry-wide planning effort involving carriers and equipment manufacturers will be the only way a compatibility solution can emerge.

IV. Petitioner Has Satisfactorily Met Its Burden Under the Applicable FCC Standard

Some commenters opposing waivers incorrectly claim that the waiver requests failed to meet their burden. Under Section 1.3 of the Commission's Rules, the Commission is required to grant waivers "if good cause is therefore shown."⁷ As interpreted by the courts, this requires that a petitioner demonstrate that "special circumstances warrant a deviation from the general rule and such a deviation will serve the public interest."⁸ Petitioner demonstrated that absent a waiver, promising handset-based technology would be precluded from consideration. Petitioner permits that the fact that promising new technology will not be considered absent a waiver constitutes "special circumstances."

Rule 22.119(a) allows the Commission to grant a waiver request if it is shown that the "underlying purpose of the rule(s) would not be served or would be frustrated by application in the instant case, and that a grant of the requested waiver would be in the public interest; *or* in view of the unique or unusual factual circumstances in the instant case, application of the rule(s) would be inequitable, unduly burdensome or contrary to the public interest, or the applicant has no reasonable alternative."⁹ Inland respectfully submits that both prongs of the waiver test are met by the facts surrounding this case. First, absent a waiver, the goal of provision of ALI may be frustrated, if a network-based solution cannot be achieved for small markets. Quite simply, a handset-based solution may prove to be the only solution for small markets, and thus failing to grant the waiver would effectively preclude consideration of this technology. Second, while even a few years ago it seemed unlikely that handset-based solutions would be feasible, it now appears that handset-based solutions may have a contribution to make in the provision of ALI. Under these circumstances, Petitioner respectfully submits that it would be contrary to the public interest to deny the waiver and thus preclude consideration of handset based technology.

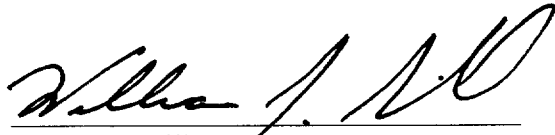
The FCC is to be commended for soliciting waiver requests several years in advance of the deadline. This has served to focus attention upon the issue at an early stage. Unfortunately, it makes it virtually impossible to present, at this time, a cornucopia of datum, deadlines, milestones and plans. Petitioner respectfully submits that the FCC has the discretion to take cognizance of this fact and to assess the waivers accordingly.

⁷ 47 C.F.R. § 1.3.

⁸ Northeast Cellular Tel. Co. v. FCC, 897 F.2d 1164, 1166 (D.C. Cir. 1990); WAIT Radio v. FCC, 418 F.2d 1153, 1159 (D.C. Cir. 1969); 47 C.F.R. § 1.3.

⁹ 47 C.F.R. §1.925(b)(3)(i) and (ii).

Grant of the Petitioner's Waiver is in the public interest as it would provide carriers the flexibility of considering promising new technology and further the FCC's important goal of remaining technologically neutral. Petitioner is not attempting to delay providing ALI; rather Petitioner hopes to find the most accurate and reliable method for provision of ALI in both its larger and smaller markets.



William J. Sill, Esq.
Heidi C. Pearlman, Esq.

Counsel to Inland Cellular Telephone
Company, General Partner of Washington
RSA No. 8 Limited Partnership, on behalf of
Washington RSA No. 8 Limited Partnership

General Partner of Eastern Sub-RSA Limited
Partnership on behalf of Eastern Sub-RSA
Limited Partnership

Donelan, Cleary, Wood & Maser, P.C.
1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 750
Washington, D.C. 20005

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that the attached document has been served by first-class mail,
postage prepaid, on this 22nd day of February, 1999, on the following:

Robert M. Gurss
Wilkes Artis Hedrick & Lanem Chartered
1666 K St., NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20006-2897
Counsel to Cincinnati Bell Wireless, LLC

Douglas I. Bradon
Vice President – External Affairs
AT&T Wireless Services, Inc.
1150 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036

Pamela J. Riley
David A. Gross
Air Touch Communications, Inc.
1818 N St., NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036

Howard J. Symons
Sara F. Seidman
Michelle M. Mundt
Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris
Glovsky and Popeo. PC
701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004
Counsel to AT&T Wireless Services, Inc.

Thomas Sullivan
President
TeleCorp PCS, Inc.
1010 N. Glebe Rd., Suite 800
Arlington, VA 22314

George Y. Wheeler
Koteen & Naftalin, LLP
1150 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036-4104

Jonathan M. Chambers
Vice President – External Affairs
and Associate General Counsel
Sprint PCS
1801 K St., NW, Suite M112
Washington, DC 20006

Thomas Gutierrez
Samuel F. Cullari
Lukas Nace Gutierrez & Sachs, Chartered
1111 19th St., NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036
Counsel to Tritel, Inc.

Leah Senitte
Manager 9-1-1 Program
Telecommunications Division
Department of General Services
State of California
601 Sequoia Pacific Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95814

James H. Benson
Director of Legal Affairs
Powertel
1233 O. G. Skinner Dr.
West Point, GA 31833-1789

William L. Roughton, Jr.
William J. Todd
PrimeCo Personal Communications, LP
601 13th St., NW, Suite 320 South
Washington, DC 20005

Susan W. Smith
Director - External Affairs
CenturyTel Wireless, Inc.
3505 Summerhill Rd.
No. 4 Summer Place
Texarkana, TX 75503

Frank Michael Panek
Ameritech
2000 W. Ameritech Center Dr., 4H84
Hoffman Estates, IL 60916

Jeffry Brueggeman
US West Wireless, LLC
1020 19th St., NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036

Christine M. Gill
Thomas J. Navin
John R. Dalton
McDermott Will & Emery
600 13th St., NW
Washington, DC 20005-3096
Counsel to Southern Company

David A. Irwin
Irwin Campbell & Tannenwald, PC
1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036-3101
Counsel to Chriton Valley
Wireless Services

Michael R. Bennet
Bennet & Bennet, PLLC
1019 19th St., NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036
Counsel to Texas RSA 7B3, Inc.
Counsel to New Mexico
RSA 6 Partnership
Counsel to Advantage Cellular
Systems, Inc.
Counsel to Arctic Slope
Telecommunications and Cellular, Inc.
Counsel to South #5
RSA Limited Partnership

Michael F. Altschul
Vice President, General Counsel
Randall S. Coleman
Vice President for Regulatory
Policy and Law
Cellular Telecommunications
Industry Association
1250 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036

Tina M. Pidgeon
Jessica Rosenworcel
Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
901 15th St., NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005
Counsel to Celulares Telefonica

Peter M. Connolly
Koteen & Naftalin
1150 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036
Counsel to United States
Cellular Corporation

Vice President, Marketing
Corsair Communications
3408 Hillview Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Robert B. Kelly
Kelly A. Quinn
Squire, Sanders & Dempsey, L.L.P.
1201 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20044

John Cimko, Chief
Policy Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
2025 M Street, NW, Room 7002
Washington, DC 20554

Dan Grosh
Policy Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
2025 M Street, NW, room 7130-A
Washington, DC 20554

Michel Fattouche, Ph.D., P.Eng.
President
CELL-LOC INC.
204, 12 Manning Close N.E.
Calgary Alberta T2E 7N6
Canada

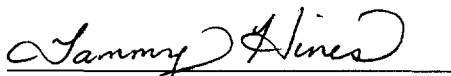
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
2025 M Street, NW, Room 5002
Washington, DC 20554

Dennis Kahan
Chief Executive Officer
SigmaOne Communications Corp.
21900 Burbank Blvd., Suite 114
Woodland Hills, CA 91367-6469

Won Kim
Policy Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal communications Commission
2025 M Street, NW, Room 7112-B
Washington, DC 20554

Mary McDermott
Todd B. Lantor
Personal Communications Industry
Association
500 Montgomery Street, Suite 700
Alexandria, VA 22314

William J. Sill
Heidi C. Pearlman
Donelan, Cleary, Wood & Maser, P.C.
1100 New York Ave., NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC, 20005-3934
Counsel to Upstate Cellular Network,
on behalf of Upstate Cellular Network
and its Affiliated Entities


Tammy Hines
Secretary to William J. Sill